

Developing eLearning skills in the library: An evaluation

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ABSTRACT

Purpose

Monash University Library has embraced eLearning as a strategy in its teaching of information research and learning skills within the university. This paper explores the sustainability of this strategy through an evaluation of eLearning related work in the organisation and concludes with recommendations for sustaining and improving practice.

Design/Methodology/Approach

This evaluation uses a mixed methods methodology. Quantitative and qualitative data is obtained from surveys, usage statistics, records of eLearning resources, focus groups, interviews and case studies for an enriched understanding of practices.

Findings

Findings suggest that library staff have gained knowledge and skills indicating a sustainable strategy. However, further work is required to sustain staff development and support staff requirements in the long term.

Research limitations/implications

This research is limited by its wide focus. Although this is mostly resolved through the use of multiple data collection methods, the thoroughness of the evaluation may have suffered while attempting to be comprehensive.

Practical implications

The conclusions of this evaluation as well as methods of its execution can be shared with other institutions wishing to produce eLearning resources in a sustainable and effective manner.

Originality/value

Monash University Library develops its eLearning resources in-house, whereas many other institutions outsource. This paper explores the effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy based on evidence discussed in the paper.

Keywords

e-learning, sustainability, professional development, blended learning, e-learning in academic library, online learning

Article classification

General review

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper describes an evaluation of eLearning as a strategy within Monash University Library (MUL or the library) to determine its effectiveness and its sustainability in order to sustain future practice.

The library leads information research and learning skills programs in partnership with faculties within the university. In an evolving higher education landscape, the following factors present challenges in this leadership role, especially where the library is a multi-branch organisation catering to staff and students across campuses: diminishing face-to-face time with students, larger student cohorts, budgets and staffing, increasing demands from partners in the faculty, and the university's strategic direction towards blended learning (online and face-to-face learning activities). These factors together with a 60000 plus student body in the university indicate the extent of the challenges and solutions need to be scalable. Thus, the library adopted eLearning as a strategy so that blended learning programs can be designed and supported effectively and sustainably, without compromising on quality learning experiences. An eLearning team was established. The growing demand for the creation of quality eLearning resources implies that team needs to coordinate, advise, assist, and develop other library staff in how to create quality and pedagogically meaningful eLearning resources. The evaluation discussed in this paper is the team's attempt at finding a solution to the question 'how best can the team contribute to achieving the library's strategic goals in a sustainable manner'.

This evaluation addresses how effective the eLearning strategy led by the eLearning team have been so far, through (1) evidence of the library's activity in eLearning and effectiveness of the engagement (e.g. positive impact on learning and teaching; increased quantity of eLearning resources), (2) professional development opportunities in eLearning for staff, (3) the engagement of library staff in eLearning and their perceived comfort levels developing

eLearning resources, and (4) perceived role of the eLearning team by library staff and the team's own reflection on performance.

Studies focusing on aspects of the effectiveness of eLearning strategy have been conducted in institutions similar to MUL (e.g. Doherty and Honey, 2010, King and Boyatt, 2015, OECD, 2005, Singh *et al.*, 2012) as well as for MUL (Mgquba and Underwood, 2016). However, the need for a comprehensive, high-level examination remains, especially in a climate of rapid changes.

The aim of this paper is to use the evaluation conducted as the base of evidence to inform the decision-making process, to determine successes and areas for further work. In order to achieve this the team used a variety of methods to gather evidence.

2. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation employs a multi-faceted, mixed-methods approach (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2009). The data collection and analysis methods are described in Table 1. The primary methods indicate those used for this paper. In particular, an online survey was devised, distributed and data (both quantitative and qualitative) collected and analysed using the online survey tool Qualtrics. The results of the survey formed the core source of evidence discussed in this paper. The survey was sent to a library staff mailing list consisting of 127 members. 48 (32 librarians, 12 learning skills advisers and 4 others) responded during the two-week duration it was open, setting a response rate of 37.8%. In addition, a number of the projects to be mentioned in the discussion had undergone their own stringent evaluations using a range of data collection methods, which are shown in the table as secondary methods.

Table 1: Evaluation methods used corresponding to topics of analysis proposed.

Topic	Primary methods	Secondary methods
Effectiveness of eLearning activity	Survey, Usage statistics, Records, Reports, Case study	Focus groups, Usability testing, Expert review, Observation of classes
Professional development	Survey, Participation statistics, Interview	Survey, Focus group Expert review
Staff engagement in eLearning	Survey, Interview	Informal feedback
Perceived role of eLearning team	Survey, Interview	Informal feedback

3. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability in the context of eLearning signifies a design that has been proven, based on evidence to be beneficial past its proof of concept stage; it has the potential to be adopted and even adapted beyond its original environment; and the skills required to develop, maintain and use the design do not reside with a few specific individuals (Gunn, 2010). The team has been thus far guided by this definition in carrying out its day to day work without explicitly articulating it in their eLearning strategy. This paper and the evaluation described presents such an opportunity.

4. EFFECTIVENESS OF eLEARNING ACTIVITY

The library engages in a wide range of eLearning activity across the university, including compiling strategic direction for e-resources, representation on committees, but it is also a creator and provider of eLearning resources and activities. Table 2 shows a summary of the level of engagement with these eLearning resources. Highlights of the most significant developments will be presented in the section that follows.

Table 2: Engagement of users on major platforms where the library presents eLearning content.


Platform	Engagement
Library guides (LibGuides)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently 140 guides with 10951303 accumulative views since 2008• Covering all major subject areas as well as specialised guides for teaching, research and collection promotion
Learning objects repository	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 145 active learning objects in the repository that are being used on various learning and teaching platforms• Accumulated a total of 53378 sessions with 34314 users totalling 87942 page views in the last 36 months
Online Tutorials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 self-contained eLearning modules covering topics from citing and referencing to academic integrity• An approximation of over 430000 top level views in the last 29 months
Learning Management System (Moodle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 56 active library courses covering topics such as copyright and study skills• Library resources and activities embedded in many major teaching courses and units

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also used to conduct staff development activities
YouTube channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 YouTube channels established in 2013 • Currently house 215 videos • 132 videos in the Research and Learning channel embedded in various learning and teaching platforms

4.1 *eLearning development highlights*

The library's online tutorials consist of a small collection of resources with a broad interest across the university. How to cite and reference correctly and academic integrity are two of these topics highlighted here.







The 'Demystifying Citing and Referencing' tutorial (Figure 1) has accumulated nearly 400000 (398581) unique views since its launch in November 2012. It has attracted over 40000 (41340) unique views over the last 7 months alone since its first appearance on the new library website in August 2015. The tutorial attracts visitors from not only Australia but around the globe. This tutorial was extensively reviewed with library and academic staff and a focus group held with students to ensure its quality and usefulness. The tutorial is used by library and academic staff and embedded within other online and face-to-face programs. At the end of 2015 the tutorial was reviewed internally and is currently being redesigned and built for a better user experience.


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Demystifying Citing and Referencing
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- Status
- Academic Integrity
 - Help: Instructions
 - Introduction
 - Module objectives
 - Topic 1: About citing and referencing
 - Introduction
 - What is citing and referencing?
 - Why are citing and referencing ess...
 - Citations, bibliographies and refere...
 - Activity: Citations, references, bibli...
 - Referencing styles
 - Topic 2: How to cite and reference
 - Introduction
 - Publication details
 - Activity: Understanding a reference
 - Finding publication information

Find 00:02 / 02:13 Minutes

 **MONASH** University
Library

Academic Integrity

Demystifying Citing and Referencing




This tutorial is designed to help you learn the principles of citing and referencing, and understand how to avoid plagiarising when integrating source material.

This tutorial will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete.

[Start ▶](#)

Figure 1: Screen capture of the 'Demystifying Citing and Referencing' online tutorial home page.

Launched in August 2013, the 'Academic Integrity' online tutorial is a series of modules exploring topics on plagiarism and academic integrity (Figure 2). A joint project between the library, the Office of the Vice-Provost (Learning and Teaching), and University Policy, it performs a key role in educating students about professional conduct in an academic environment. Internal and external feedback was sought through focus groups with students and academics to ensure its effectiveness. It has been viewed almost 60000 (58618) times since its creation and additional teaching resources such as mandatory quizzes have been built to integrate its use into general teaching activities, as well as in university disciplinary procedures.


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Academic integrity


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Sir John Monash, after whom Monash University is named, said "...equip yourself for life, not solely for your own benefit but for the benefit of the whole community". This is the principle behind academic integrity; the pursuit of quality scholarship and education in alignment with the policies and expectations of the University.


This set of modules will teach you:

- The definition and ethical principles of academic integrity
- Practical and cognitive skills to ensure integrity in your academic work
- Types of plagiarism, how it occurs and how it can be avoided
- The definition of collusion and how it relates to academic integrity
- Consequences of academic misconduct and where to find help if needed.


We suggest you start with the Introduction module below. To view the accessible alternative versions below.




Introduction: Academic Integrity




Ethics




Practical Skills




Cognitive Skills




Ctrl-C Plagiarism




Error-404 Plagiarism




Find-Replace Plagiarism




Hybrid & Mashup Plagiarism




Recycle & Clone Plagiarism




Remix Plagiarism




Retweet Plagiarism



Collusion



Consequences



Getting Help

Menu

- > [Academic integrity \(home\)](#)
- > [Introduction](#)

Types of plagiarism

- > [Ctrl-C](#)
- > [Error-404](#)
- > [Find and replace](#)
- > [Hybrid mashup](#)
- > [Recycle and clone](#)
- > [Remix](#)
- > [Retweet](#)

Skills to avoid plagiarism

- > [Cognitive skills](#)
- > [Practical skills](#)

Ethics and conduct

- > [Collusion](#)
- > [Ethics](#)
- > [Consequences](#)
- > [Getting help](#)

Other relevant resources

- > [Demystifying Citing and Referencing](#)

Figure 2: Screen capture of the 'Academic Integrity' online tutorial home page.

Each subject taught at the university has its own site (teaching unit) in the university's learning management system, Moodle. Ordinarily the library embeds library content into faculty teaching units, but it also creates its own library specific Moodle units. There are currently 56 active units covering topics such as copyright and study skills. Table 3 below highlights a few of these units.

Table 3: High profile library Moodle units and their performance.

Unit Name	Audience	Access
Copyright module	Staff and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4894 views in the last 3 years • Promoted university wide
Mastering Academic and Research Skills (MARS)	Postgraduate students in the Faculty of Business and Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winner of Faculty of Business of Economics 2014 Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence
Law Academic Research Skills (LARS)	Students in the Faculty of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Better Teaching Better Learning grant
Creative integrity	Students in the Faculty of Art and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test-your-knowledge module developed in conjunction with faculty teaching staff to promote copyright • Self testing quiz used 1087 times since introduction

4.2 Contribution to teaching and learning

92.6% of those responded to the online survey felt that eLearning content was contributing positively to their teaching and learning activities. The following respondents' comments support this view:

Allowing for students to access information at their own time and pace, use multiple times and from any location. Supplements our face to face classes with interactive elements and allows for us to also collect data on usage.

They filled a gap and addressed queries we know our users had; there were also several unit specific modules for large cohorts where we were able to address more of the issues for assignment and research than we would have been able face to face.

Increased student engagement, additional resources for learning beyond the classroom.

Nevertheless, it was also evident that face-to-face teaching was still preferred and eLearning content was seen as supplemental, as past studies have also suggested (Gupta *et al.*, 2004).

I have only used them within a teaching/presenting framework. They are additional too, not a substitute for, face-to-face engagement.

On the other hand, there is also anecdotal feedback that eLearning resources created by the library have fostered a more engaging face-to-face learning experience. In a program conducted for first year Engineering students all attendees in the classes actively interacted with online tutorials and a quiz, whereas previously they were largely unengaged. The class facilitator was also able to engage in deeper discussion with the students and answer more questions as a result of using the blended learning approach.

4.3 Discussion and recommendations

The range, volume, and high usage of eLearning resources that have been created demonstrates a major contribution to the goal of incorporating eLearning content into research and learning programs. Furthermore, staff feel that eLearning is contributing to their teaching and learning activities by enhancing the learning experience in various ways. However, this does remain only indicative of how these initiatives are contributing to an effective learning experience. As merit, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the inclusion of eLearning is at least contributing to sustainability because the use, reuse, and embedding of eLearning objects into various programs means that resources can be played and reviewed, or even reworked at any time, reducing the time needed for developing new resources or repeating the same content in a face-to-face context.

The development of high quality and pedagogically meaningful eLearning resources and activities requires expertise in both education and technology. Without appropriate support mechanisms in place for staff, it is fraught with risks and frustrations, not to mention the use of valuable resources (Bates, 2001). In addition, although there has been a marked increase in volume of quality eLearning resources and activities produced, it would still not be a completely sustainable model if all this work was left in the hands of a small group of people and not shared out across the library (Gunn, 2010).

Therefore, the team recommends that additional tools are created and staff skills developed in conducting effectiveness evaluations of eLearning interventions in learning programs so that the body of evidence can grow in this area, helping to determine areas of focus. Furthermore, that staff development activities continue to be a strategic focus to sustain this upward trend.

5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We view professional development as encompassing formally planned and naturally occurring activities that staff may engage in collaboratively or independently, to acquire and develop ideas, knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices that bring about change in their work and foster inquiry-based learning within a supported environment.” (Singh *et al.*, 2012, pp.2).

Aligning with this definition of professional development, MUL eLearning team provides one-on-one consultation to library staff or to groups working on projects, practical workshops (covering topics as diverse as pedagogy, writing eLearning storyboards and how to use software), peer learning sessions, as well as a blended learning staff development course.

5.1 *Workshops and peer learning sessions*

In the past 4 years more than 30 eLearning workshops in total have been offered to library staff with numbers of between 5 and 25 participants each. An additional 68 formal peer learning sessions were offered with a total attendance of over 1000 (1208). The aim of these sessions is to encourage and enable peer learning across the research and learning spectrum, not only eLearning. The great popularity of these sessions is an indication of staff engagement and knowledge sharing within and beyond the library.

80% of those responded to the online survey have attended some form of professional development in relation to eLearning. It was the assumption of the team that not enough formal professional development opportunities were available due to time and staffing constraints. However, the response was overwhelmingly positive with 76.9% thinking that the sessions offered were sufficient and 65.5% felt they covered a wide enough variety. Nevertheless, qualitative comments still revealed gaps in timing, location and length of sessions:

Whilst workshops are useful, I think we need to make these sessions more accessible.

They are usually on when I am teaching. Also as a new staff member I don't often know where to find them.

5.2 *eLearning course*

Since 2011 the library has offered a blended learning course conducted through Moodle and in face-to-face sessions. The course aims to develop library staff knowledge and skills in developing eLearning activities and resources.

Five courses have been conducted since 2011. A total number of 21 people completed the course and 34 participants are in progress. The number of people engaging in elements of the course is higher than depicted here, as staff act as consultants and reviewers for some parts of the course. Some course attrition due to staff movement or other work commitments has also occurred.

During the course staff have developed six high quality eLearning tutorials for use reaching a broad university audience with a number of others in progress, as well as the further development of the Copyright Module (see section 4.1).

The first few iterations of the course were evaluated and documented in Smith and Yates (2012) and Yates and Smith (2013) showing the course to be a valued professional development opportunity for staff and contributing to a sustainable eLearning strategy (Deacon *et al.*, 2016).

5.3 Discussion and recommendations

Library staff value professional development as an important factor contributing to their eLearning knowledge and skills. A particularly useful suggestion was to provide alternative access to these workshops via online platforms. As the university updates and implements video conferencing and webinar facilities across campuses this could increase the reach of professional development opportunities. For example, the team has been incorporating video conferencing technology in its practical sessions with some degree of success at reaching a wider audience more frequently. However, its effectiveness will require further investigation.

There was also an overall preference for hands-on workshops that focus on specific skills and technology, reflecting what other researchers have discovered (Singh *et al.*, 2012). Staff desired follow-up sessions to further build skills and knowledge aligning with key professional development design factors that bring about durability of change hence ensuring its sustainability (Wells, 2007).

6. STAFF ENGAGEMENT IN eLEARNING

Before 2009 some staff had engaged as content experts in the creation of a large and well used language and learning online website, but for the most part, library staff were not engaged in the creation of eLearning resources.

Reflecting back, initially staff had reservations about creating eLearning resources with a general feeling being that 'someone else' should be doing the creation. However, there were a few early adopters and since the establishment of the team a large majority of staff are now engaged in some way with the creation of eLearning resources.

The online survey revealed that 91.4% of those responded have created some eLearning content for their work in the library. 89.2% felt they were quite confident (ranging from having a great deal of confidence to a moderate amount) in creating eLearning content and the only negative response was provided by a respondent who had not created any eLearning in the library. This is an encouraging result and is evidence of a high level of engagement.

In an interview conducted with a staff member who had been involved in a number of eLearning projects, she explained how her understanding of eLearning had evolved over time, where she felt in the beginning it was all about technology and now sees it as much more about applying technology to learning in ways that are pedagogically sound. She added that working in eLearning projects increased her understanding of learning more generally. This maturing understanding was one of the goals for the establishment of an eLearning team and supports the strategy adopted by the library.

This increase in awareness, if by assumption also present among other library staff, may suggest that staff can interact and collaborate in more meaningful ways with its research and learning agenda, in particular where eLearning is to be incorporated.

Discussion and recommendations

The results and feedback provided by staff signify a high level of engagement in eLearning with high levels of confidence and comfort. This may be seen as an indication of the effective implementation of the eLearning strategy.

Additionally, the survey asked about the extent to which an encouraging work environment contributes to the sustainability of eLearning design and development activities. This category was ranked the highest (4.03/5) which shows that library leadership and staff have embraced the eLearning strategy. It also appears to be in support of the view that a work environment with features such as an encouraging culture and high-quality support can enable innovation and increase adoption rates of eLearning (King and Boyatt, 2015).

Mgquba and Underwood (2016) recommended that a new role of eLearning librarian should be introduced to create eLearning content while other staff can be the content providers. This suggestion was derived from the view that eLearning is predominantly a technical and time consuming skill. The library acknowledges its validity but recognises it is not in itself a sustainable approach with increasing demand for the creation of eLearning resources. Furthermore, library staff involved in projects are involved from the analysis and design phases through to creation and implementation and members tend to naturally gravitate to their strengths or further develop what they perceive as their weaknesses. Applying Collins *et al.* (1989) notion of a cognitive apprenticeship, members' knowledge and skills increase through the experience. Wenger (2006 as cited by Singh *et al.*, 2012) suggested identifying champions with an eLearning development focus to their responsibilities within the organisation. Thus, the team recommends the further development of a community of practice comprised of champions at each branch library. They can not only take on some of the content creation responsibilities but more importantly cultivate the share of knowledge and stimulate peer learning.

7. PERCEIVED ROLE OF ELEARNING TEAM

Prior to 2009 the majority of other eLearning related work rested with the instructional design librarian role, who was responsible for the technical creation and management of content. The introduction of the eLearning team was envisaged to lead the eLearning agenda within the library with both a pedagogical and technological focus so that staff can incorporate eLearning as part of a teaching and learning repertoire both within specific programs, as well as more broadly across discipline areas. This vision is gradually being realised as evidence has shown in the previous sections. To further support this, the eLearning team has grown from one eLearning coordinator in 2009 to the addition of an eLearning office in 2012 and an eLearning librarian in 2015.

When asked to rate the importance of aspects contributing to their development of eLearning knowledge and skills, the presence of the eLearning team was rated the second highest (3.97/5) among all six categories. All the responses were positive when recognising the team's contribution to sustaining eLearning practices in the library with 63.3% rated its performance in the highest category (excellent). Similar perception was also observed during interviews and other informal conversations.

While reflecting on its responsibilities the team recognises three key aspects to its role: (1) the provision of consultation, (2) the advocacy of the use of planning tools and templates, (3) and the support of eLearning technologies.

73.3% of the respondents to the survey have worked with members of the eLearning team while developing an eLearning module and 95.5% thought this experience had contributed to their development of eLearning knowledge and skills. Many positive comments could be found throughout the survey, however the long turnover time, the scarce availability of team members and desire for closer collaboration were also highlighted.

More time with the staff would be fantastic - particularly in the planning phase to indicate where things are more complicated than they first appear!

MUL was in the middle of some staff changeover when the survey was active. This has provided some interesting insights into the promotional effort of the team.

It might be hard given the turnover in the library, but some sort of introductory training for new staff - I had to google what on earth Captivate was, because of course I didn't know where the e-learning team was.

Members of the team now travel to all branch libraries on a regular schedule to provide additional face-to-face consultation. A team email has been established in order to better coordinate requests and optimise the use of team's resources. A welcome email is now sent to all new staff members containing team contact details and key resources to help them get started. The effectiveness of these new implementations can form the base of future evaluations.

The eLearning team has over the years established a number of processes and procedures through working collaboratively with practitioners and eLearning resource developers. Through this process a number of standardised practices and the establishment of a toolset (e.g. templates and guidelines) has evolved. The aim was to simplify and standardise the development process for quality assurance and in turn sustainability. 66.6% of the responses have used these tools in some capacity. However, there were still 16.6% who did not know about their existence, indicating a gap in communication and potential in strategic adjustment. In addition, 15% of the respondents could not see the value in using these tools with comments suggesting for them to be 'more streamlined' and 'less bureaucracy/documentation'.

The library procures and provides support for a suite of eLearning technologies. This includes those that were available university wide (e.g. Moodle, Adobe Captivate, Equella) and some that have been implemented locally (e.g. LibGuides, PowToon, Piktochart). The encouragement to select and use technologies that are familiar to users within and beyond the library and with support in place is one way of ensuring the currency and sustainability of eLearning content created. This appears to be well received as depicted in Figure 3 with mostly high engagement rates across the technologies named in the survey (with the exception of Adobe Presenter). Technologies for audio-visual content creation were particularly popular (PowToon, Piktochart, YouTube).

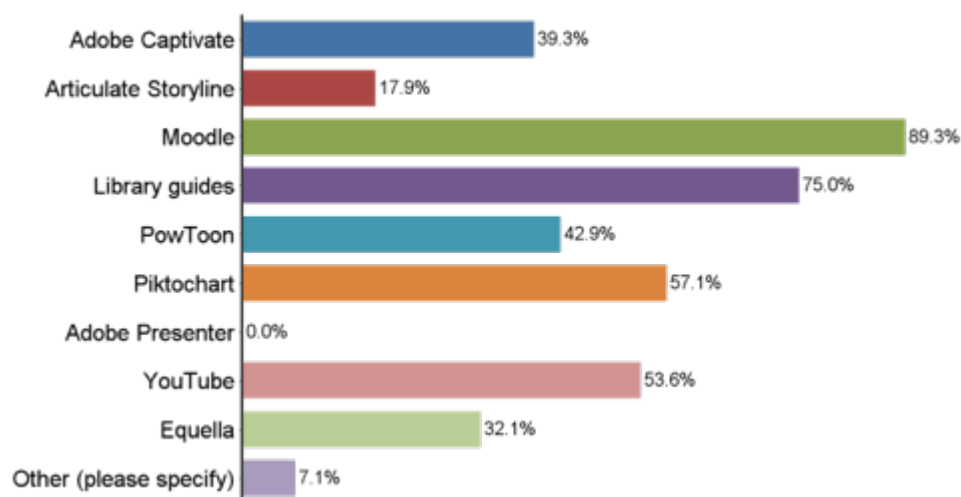


Figure 3 Use of technology for eLearning in MUL.

This may be interpreted in the sense that technologies are being selected to suit the purpose of the design over their availability and/or prescriptiveness. In fact, the results confirmed that staff rated 'fits the purpose of the project' the most important factor when choosing a technology (4.64/5). This finding points once again to a maturing understanding of eLearning development.

Discussion and recommendations

Overall library staff are satisfied with the performance of the eLearning team and appreciate the contribution it has made to sustaining eLearning work. However, as the results have shown the supporting role of the eLearning team still needs improving.

Studies have recognised the effective support for eLearning relies on it being tailored to staff needs and available at the point of need (King and Boyatt, 2015, OECD, 2005). The highly resource intensive and time consuming face-to-face consultation although popular, raises concerns of sustainability in the long run. The use of alternative collaboration and consultation means (e.g. Google hangout) may ease such concerns somewhat by removing the time and location barriers. One recurring suggestion from the survey as well as through informal staff feedback was to make available examples that can be easily adopted and to curate showcases of best practices. Enhancing the quality of planning documents and templates, building collections of adoptable samples and centrally managed reusable resources, and ensuring their accessibility whenever and wherever needed can also facilitate sustainability as staff can work with these resources without being in constant contact with the team.

The thinking of eLearning designs being pedagogy-driven instead of technology-led emerged from the survey results aligns closely with what the literature has been recommending (King and Boyatt, 2015, Laurillard, 2008). However, this also inevitably presents cases where innovative technologies may have to be chosen for the design. Finding the time to investigate new, innovative technologies that may suit the design better but require deeper support should form a substantial part of responsibilities of the eLearning team if eLearning development work is to be effective (Wells, 2007). The implementation of the recommendations in this paper has the potential to free up some of the much needed time and resources currently taken up by increasing amount consultation and other support activities. Additionally, innovation will be encouraged through the systematic and team based review of new technologies so that staff remain current and enthusiastic.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

This paper is the MUL eLearning team's ambitious first attempt at comprehensively evaluating the effectiveness of its eLearning strategy in order to determine its sustainability and plan for the future through the construction of an evidence base. Although careful consideration has been put into the formation of topics as well as methods of data collection and analysis, the broad scope of the study could have caused the focus to be lost on certain aspects of the examination. Further studies with narrower focus on each of the individual topics covered may help to paint a fuller picture.

In particular, due to deadline constraints the online survey was sent out to library staff during a particularly busy teaching period and was only open for two weeks, potentially resulting in lower response rates and inadequate thoroughness of the qualitative feedback. However, the comprehensive design of the survey means it can be re-deployed in the future with data collected periodically to add a longitudinal dimension to the evaluation.

In addition, assessing the effectiveness of eLearning content has remained debatable (Mgquba and Underwood, 2016). Coupling with the paper's strong emphasis on library and library staff, the user perspective of the evaluation has been less than ideal. While rigorous evaluations have been carried out on the learning effectiveness of some of the projects mentioned in this paper, future studies with a more systematic approach to user experience and feedback analysis will be valuable.

9. CONCLUSION

This paper explored the sustainability of eLearning from four dimensions with the assumption that they contribute to the long term effectiveness of the eLearning strategy. These include (1) evidence of high quality eLearning resources produced results in more sustainable research and learning activities; (2) professional development enables the expansion of staff skills and knowledge, allowing advancement in eLearning development; (3) staff engagement in eLearning development helps to increase confidence and to foster an encouraging work environment for continuing participation; (4) examination of the eLearning team's performance both by staff and as an internal reflection helps to identify strengths and gaps which in turn leads to the re-prioritisation of the team's responsibilities that can provide long term, sustainable support.

The range and quantity of eLearning resources developed and platforms currently in use by library staff members is an indication of a high level of engagement and effectiveness, implying a degree of sustainable practice. The quality of these resources is evidenced through recognition, high usage - both locally and internationally, and intensive evaluation activities. Notwithstanding this evidence, there is the risk, through factors such as staff attrition or unengaged staff, that the sustainability of eLearning could be compromised. Therefore, it is important to continuously invest in professional development and improving evaluation practices.

The professional development opportunities provided by the library are highly valued through such initiatives as workshops, peer learning sessions, and an eLearning course. Despite the high value of these events, there exist challenges such as difficulties in the timing of such events, location and even the length of sessions. These issues provide an opportunity to the eLearning team to experiment with alternatives with the minimum impact on its capacity to sustain other areas of importance.

The high level of engagement in creating eLearning resources and the supportive environment this occurs within is an indication of an eLearning strategy being applied effectively. This is not only evidenced through survey results, but in the qualitative feedback provided by staff about how their understanding of eLearning has improved. There is room for improvement as the more staff engaged the more likely eLearning can be sustained. This requires the continuing cultivation of a work environment that encourages sharing and peer learning. For example, establishing a community of practice comprised of champions at each library branch is envisaged to contribute to sustainability.

The role of the eLearning team is highly valued by staff. However, the procedures it has established, the tools and templates it provides, as well as the technology it supports while also valued indicates some degree of dissatisfaction. Compounded by a constantly evolving technology context, which itself places a demand on sustainability; for the team, for the technology used to deploy eLearning resources, and for staff developing the resources. While continuing to promote existing planning resources and technologies the team recommends that a greater variety of templates and samples are developed and more time spent on new technology discovery to encourage variety and innovation.

Importantly, conversations involving stakeholders at all levels in the library and beyond need to occur to increase awareness and staff engagement, and to ensure the ongoing success of the strategic implementation of recommendations proposed (Doherty and Honey, 2010, Tynan, 2006).

This evaluation provided an opportunity to reflect, review and plan. It has revealed insights but also limitations, both of which are valuable to the eLearning team on the road to sustaining MUL's eLearning goals. Other institutions may also find inspirations when conducting their own evaluations in similar contexts.

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